



N° II. Monday, January 9.

*Criminibus debent Hortos, Prætoria, Mensas,
Argentum Vetus, & stantem extra Pocula Caprum.*
Juv.

To CALEB D'ANVERS, Esq;

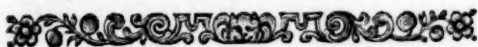
S I R,



HOUGH the Reflections of one of your Correspondents, who subscribes himself *Mercator*, on some *Frauds* lately discover'd at an *East-India* Sale, are very just in the main; yet I must take the Liberty to except against an Inference or two, which he has drawn from them, and beg Leave to add some farther Observations on that Subject.

I am fully of this Gentleman's Opinion, *That the utmost Care ought to be taken that no Corruptions and Abuses should be admitted in'o Trading Companies; or, since the best Precautions are often vain, that they should never escape with Impunity, when discover'd.* How far the Case of Mr. Ecclestone may fall under this Head, and his Practices be subject to an Imputation of *Fraud*, I shall leave the World to determine, from the Complaint of *those Persons*, who are supposed to be injured by them, and the Proceedings of the *general Court* of the *East-India Company*, as well as from that Account, which has been made publick in the *Whitehall Evening Post*; together with your Correspondent's Observations upon it.

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But I can by no means agree with this Gentleman, *that we are now obliged to suppose Mr. Ecclestone entirely innocent*, from the Resolutions, which were taken in that Assembly; which ended only in an *Adjournment* of the Question, *sine Die*, whether he was guilty or not; to which peculiar Method of Proceeding they were induced, no doubt, by very good Reasons; for had his *Case* been as *clear*, or his *Defence* as *full*, as the Author of that Paper seems to represent it, the Business of the Day would, in all Probability, have concluded in an unanimous Vote of his *Innocence*, instead of such an extraordinary *Suspension* of their Judgment; which leaves the Affair of his Conduct totally *undecided*, just as they found it, when they first met together.

Whether the Examination of this Matter is ever to be resumed either by the *same Assembly*, or by some *higher Power*, I cannot pretend to determine; but I will be free to declare, with your Correspondent, that it is absolutely necessary, for the full Justification of the *Company*, as well as Mr. *Ecclestone*, that a Point of such Consequence to all *fair Traders* should have some farther Enquiry made into it; especially at this Juncture, when we seem to be in no small Danger of being involved in an *expensive War*, in order to support that particular Branch of Commerce.

The Reasons for this will still appear much stronger, if it be true (as I have often heard it asserted) that Mr. *Ecclestone* himself, in his *Defence*, as it is called, did not pretend fully to *justify* his own Conduct; but, on the contrary, seem'd to acknowledge that he had been led by *bad Precedents*, together with the *Frailties* and *Infirmities* of human Nature, into some Practices, which, upon serious Reflection, he found Reason to repent of; and that he had been unhappily guilty of some *Mistakes* and *Neglect* in the Duty of his Office, as well as the poor *Warehouse-Keeper*; in Extenuation of which, I am told, that he desired

to look back to his *former Behaviour*; and hoped, if they had, at any Time, found him useful to *Trade*, or instrumental in the Service of the *Company*, that they would overlook this *Miscarriage* and indulge him for once, in the *Frailties* of his Nature.

I am very unwilling, on any Account, to interpose myself between *unhappy Men* and *Mercy*; especially since we are informed, by a late *Courant*, that some Persons concerned in the Management of the *Ostend Company*, who are subject, it seems, to the same *Infirmities*, and have been guilty of such kind of *Mistakes* and *Neglect* in their Duty, have met with the like *Lenity*; tho' such *Indulgences* are inconsistent with the antient *Politicks* of those Countries; for Sir *William Temple* informs us, that the great Trade of the Netherlands was formerly owing to nothing more than to the *Exactness* of their Regulations, and to the Severity of their Justice against every Abuse in it. And as to the Case of former *Merit and Services*, the great Earl of *Clarendon* tells us, in his Speech against the corrupt Judges in King *Charles the First's* Reign, when he carried up an *Impeachment* against them to the House of Lords, that if they appeared to their Lordships under the Reputation of *Prudence and Integrity*, in all Cases, except These presented to them, Their Lordships would be at least of the same Opinion, that *He of Lacedæmon* was of the *Athenians*. If they carried themselves well, when Time was, and now ill, they deserve a double Punishment; because they are not good, as they were, and because they are evil, as they were not.

However, it is to be wished (and I hope not to be doubted) that whatever *Lenity* may be thought proper to be used towards these *unhappy Men*, it will in no manner impede the *strictest Enquiry* into the Bottom of this Affair, in order to prevent, for the future, the like *Infirmities*, *Mistakes*, and *Neglect*; and whenever or wheresoever this seasonable Enquiry shall be made,

made, I think it cannot be improper that the following *Queries* (which I have heard often put in private Conversation) should also be considered, *viz.*

Q. I. Whether the *Governors* and principal Persons in their *Factories* abroad do not generally raise very great Estates; which may sometimes be made by divers unwarrantable Practices, and the Oppression of the *Merchants* in those Countries, to the Prejudice of the Interest of their Masters in England.

Q. II. Whether their *Super-Cargoes* to *China*, (where the Company have no settled *Factory*) being invested with a full Power to dispose of the whole Cargoes of their respective Ships, and lay out the Produce of them in the Goods of the Country, do not sometimes put off great Quantities of *Silver* upon the Account of *Themselves* and some particular *powerful Men*, at double or treble the *Market Price*, to the manifest Damage of the Company; the *Purchasers* of such *Silver* finding their Recompence in the Sale of their COUNTRY *Commodities*, at the same *exorbitant Rates*, for the Company's Use?

Q. III. Whether their *Captains* and other *Officers* do not frequently exceed their *Indulgences*, by bringing home much greater Quantities of Goods, than are allowed by the Regulations of the Company, to their own unjust Advantage, and the apparent Detriment of the *Proprietors*?

Q. IV. Whether the above-mentioned Practices, and many more of the same corrupt Nature, are not sometimes well known to particular *Directors*, and by them connived at or encouraged for a Share in the Plunder?

Q. V. Whether, if all or any of these Practices and Corruptions are at any Time in Use, the Persons guilty of them, or any of them, have not

thereby manifestly broken their *Oaths* to the *Company*, and shamefully violated the *Trust* reposed in them?

2. VI. Whether the accidental Discovery of so extraordinary a *Fraud*, as is said to have been made at a late Sale, ought not justly to awaken the *Proprietors* and *Directors* to a Suspicion, that some others of their *Officers* and *Servants* may have *mistaken* or *neglected*, if not manifestly transgressed, their respective Duties, besides this *unhappy, poor Man*, whom they have lately found guilty of some *natural Infirmities*, and *suspended* from his Office? And whether the strictest and most publick *INQUIRY* would not be proper at this Juncture, in order to vindicate the Reputation of their *innocent Officers*, by punishing the Offences of the *Guilty*?

Give me Leave to conclude, Sir, with one of Sir *William Temple's* Observations on *Trade*, from his accurate Account of the united Provinces of the *Netherlands* before-mentioned.

“ It is, *says he*, no constant Rule, that Trade
“ makes Riches; for there may be a *Trade*, which
“ *impoverishes* a Kingdom; as it is not going often
“ to Market that enriches the *Country-Man*; but,
“ on the contrary, if every Time he comes there,
“ he *buys* to a greater Value than he *sells*, he grows
“ the *poorer*, the oftner he goes; but the only and
“ certain *Scale* of Riches arising from *Trade* in a Na-
“ tion, is the Proportion of what is *exported*, for
“ the Consumption of *Others*, to what is *imported*
“ for *their own*.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant,

C. D.

CIVICUS.

I think

I think myself highly obliged to the Author of the foregoing Letter, and must confess that I have myself frequently heard Complaints of the same Practices, mentioned in these *Queries*; which seem, at this Time, to deserve and demand the *severest Scrutiny*. I have often been assured, that the *East-India Company* have several *Governments* in their Disposal, of much *greater Value* than any in his Majesty's Gift; not excepting even that greatest and most honourable of all, the *LIEUTENANCY of IRELAND*; which we have the more Reason to believe, because we have seen several Persons return from those Employments, after a Stay of *three or four Years* only, laden with immense Wealth; affecting the Port and Grandeur of *British Noblemen*; and cultivating Alliances with the most powerful Families in the Kingdom. But the greatest Grievance is, that they commonly discover the same *governing Spirit* here, which they exercised abroad, and attempt the same Kind of *Dominion and Authority* over the Countries where they settle, which they found practicable in those *foreign and arbitrary Commands*.

Gray's-Inn, Jan. 7,
1716.

CAL. D'ANVERS.



Friday,